

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the fifth paragraph on page 8 as follows:

As further shown in FIGs. 3A-3C, interconnect 300 also includes a patterned first metal (metal-1) layer 316 that is formed on isolation layer 312 and contacts 314, ~~and a second layer of isolation material 320 that is formed on isolation layer 312 and metal-1 layer 316. Interconnect 300 further includes a number of vias 322 that are formed through isolation layer 320, and a patterned second metal (metal-2) layer 324 that is formed on isolation layer 320 and vias 322. Vias 322 provide an electrical connection between patterned metal-1 layer 316 and patterned metal-2 layer 324.~~ In the FIGS. 3A-3C example, patterned metal-1 layer 316 includes a first metal line 316A, a second metal line 316B, and a third metal line 316C. In addition, a first space 318A is defined to lie horizontally entirely between the first and second metal lines 316A and 316B, a second space 318B is defined to lie horizontally entirely between the second and third metal lines 316B and 316C, and a first region 318C is defined to lie within second space 318B and contact a side wall of second metal line 316B.

Please insert the following new paragraph directly after the fifth paragraph on page 8:

Further, interconnect 300 includes a second layer of isolation material 320 that is formed on isolation layer 312 and metal-1 layer 316. Interconnect 300 further includes a number of vias 322 that are formed through isolation layer 320, and a patterned second metal (metal-2) layer 324 that is formed on isolation layer 320 and vias 322. Vias 322 provide an electrical connection between patterned metal-1 layer 316 and patterned metal-2 layer 324. In the FIGS. 3A-3C example, patterned metal-2 layer 324 includes a fourth metal line 324A and a fifth metal line

324B. Further, a second region 326 is defined to lie horizontally entirely between the fourth and fifth metal lines 324A and 324B.

Please amend the first paragraph on page 9 as follows:

In addition, interconnect 300 includes a third layer of isolation material 330 that is formed on isolation layer 320 and metal-2 layer 324, and a number of vias 332 that are formed through isolation layer 330. Interconnect 300 further includes a patterned third metal (metal-3) layer 334 that is formed on isolation layer 330 and vias 332, and a fourth layer of isolation material 340 that is formed on the third layer of isolation material 330 and metal-3 layer 334. Patterned metal-3 layer 334 can include a sixth metal line 334A, a seventh metal line 334B, and an eighth metal line 334C. In addition, a third region 336 is defined to lie horizontally entirely between the sixth and seventh metal lines 334A and 334B. Isolation layers 312, 320, 330, and 340 can be implemented with, for example, a low-K dielectric.

Please amend the last paragraph on page 11 as follows:

Interconnect 700 includes a first layer of isolation material 712 that is formed on substrate 710, and a number of contacts 714 that are formed through isolation layer 712. Contacts 714 provide an electrical connection to active regions on the surface of substrate 710. Interconnect 700 also includes a patterned first metal (metal-1) layer 716 that is formed on isolation layer 712 and contacts 714, ~~and a layer of insulation material 718 that is formed on isolation layer 712 and patterned metal-1 layer 716.~~ In the FIGS. 7A-7B example, patterned metal-1 layer 716 includes a first metal line 716A, a second metal line 716B, and a third metal line 716C. In addition, a first space 717A is defined to lie horizontally entirely between the first and second metal lines 716A and 716B, and a second space 717B is defined to lie horizontally entirely between the second and third metal lines 716B and 716C.

Further, interconnect 700 includes a layer of insulation material 718 that is formed on isolation layer 712 and patterned metal-1 layer 716.